



Working In Washington

2004
Annual Report

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

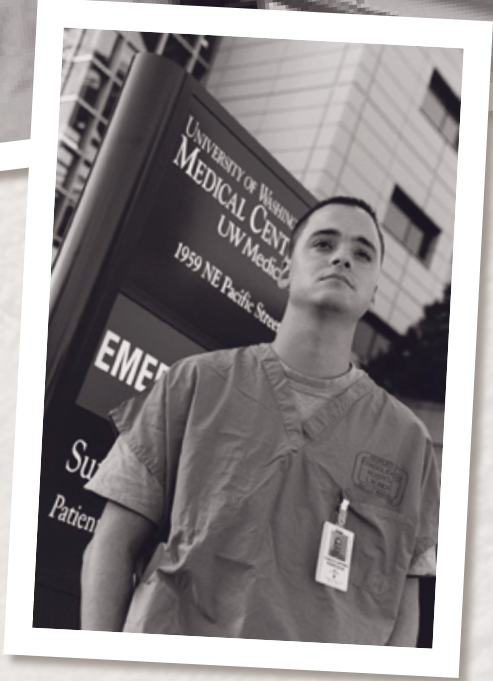
The DVR Mission:

To empower individuals with disabilities to achieve a greater quality of life by obtaining and maintaining employment.

V A L U E S

At DVR, we believe in...

- ☐ Excellence
- ☐ Hard work
- ☐ Community
- ☐ Transformation
- ☐ Equality
- ☐ Human potential
- ☐ Dreams



Dear VR Colleagues,

I am pleased to release the Washington State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation annual report showcasing a few of the incredible success stories our customers achieved in 2004. The stories throughout this report demonstrate the unique talents of the individuals we serve and each one reflects the kind of success that inspires us to continue doing this important work. I am proud of the contributions and commitment of DVR employees, who collectively assisted 2,107 people with disabilities in Washington enter the work force.

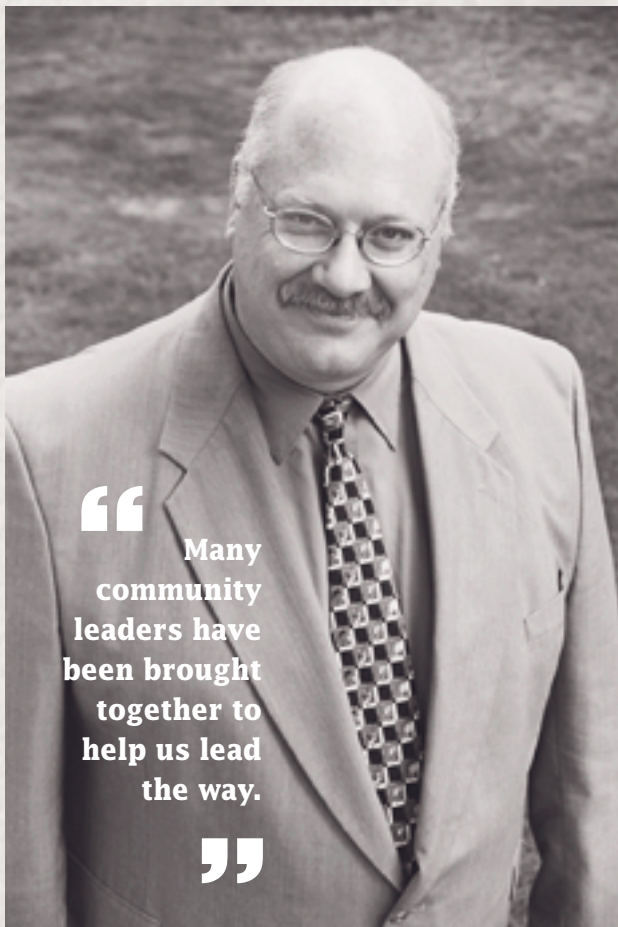
We have chosen to highlight some wonderful self-employment success stories that show how creativity and dedication have winning results. DVR has also served as a statewide leader in the Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS) with Social Security as a way to support success. Our partnerships with mental health club houses continue to expand, as well as our ties to the Deaf-Blind community and the Hispanic community. We're building a network of business leaders in Yakima who believe in hiring people with disabilities. Many community leaders have been brought together to help us lead the way to ensure that our customers have all the options fully available for their success.

This year you will see an emphasis on the importance of partnerships in the annual report. These partnerships create opportunities for all of us to combine and expand the resources available to support customers in seeking, gaining and maintaining employment. This year, DVR staff became even more involved in building and strengthening partnerships within their communities with excellent results. Many of the strongest partners are family members of individuals with disabilities themselves, who obviously play a huge role in supporting the success of their loved ones.

Thank you for your interest in our customers' successes and your contribution to making the world better for us all.

A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink.

Mike O'Brien, Director



“ Many community leaders have been brought together to help us lead the way. ”

Monica Fortin

By VRC Intern Elsbeth Calvo (Kent, WA)

I think that often we voc counselors (me included, of course) tend to get judgmental about customers that don't step right up to the plate the way we hope they will. Then we set up contingencies for them to jump through that tend to show they are not "ready."

A better way, I believe, is to be creative in finding ways to help that person grow and be successful first in the vocational rehabilitation process, then at employment. This is especially challenging with customers who have a mental illness. Monica was a young woman whose disabilities included agoraphobia and severe social anxiety. It was very difficult for her to be around other people. She had a hard time dealing with authority figures and reacted to supervision by totally closing down if she felt the slightest criticism. This is how she lost her previous jobs. She had tried DVR before and had a couple of "Closed-Unsuccessful's" behind her.

Like many with this configuration of anxieties, Monica loved animals and wanted to get a job as a vet assistant.

However, to arrive at the point where she could even participate in VR, Monica needed a way to get over that fear barrier. Instead of meeting in a clinically cold DVR interview room, I asked Monica to join me at Starbucks. It was very challenging for her at first to tolerate the eyes of other coffee drinkers. Like many people with severe social anxiety, she found it difficult to eat in front of other people.

Over the next few weeks, while sipping our lattes, we talked about social situations at work and how to deal with them. At a table in the back, I role-played making small

talk, defending boundaries, and dealing with criticism. The determined Monica attended every session, each time a little braver and more willing to risk being out of the house and around people. One day she told me she had gone to the King County Fair and had eaten a scone in front of people. We whooped with joy!

After that, Monica was able to meet with Jason Person, placement specialist from Valley Cities Counseling; although I had to be present for a while to alleviate her anxiety. Monica threw herself into the job search and after a couple of months, got a position as a veterinary assistant at the Benson Veterinary Clinic working with some great people. She even occasionally works the reception desk dealing with the public! Thanks to her determination, hard work and productive collaboration with DVR, Monica has carved a new beginning for herself.



“
Monica has carved
a new beginning
for herself.
”
– VRC Elsbeth Calvo



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

DigiGirlz Technology Camp
By Jan Holler, Corporate Consultant

This year DVR and Microsoft forged a new alliance to assist young women with disabilities from Eastern Washington and to increase their awareness about career options in scientific and technical fields. DVR recruited and arranged for five girls with disabilities to join 73 girls without disabilities in grades 9-12 to participate in Microsoft's DigiGirlz technology camp August 9-12, 2004. The camp featured a variety of products and business discussions, tours and creative workshops in which the girls with disabilities had the opportunity to design and build web pages, learn basic programming skills and experiment with user interface design architecture. For the first time, Microsoft paired the girls up with employees to experience the use of technology skills in a workplace setting. The girls also had a chance in the quiet of the evenings to develop their own scrapbooks to share with friends and family regarding their DigiGirlz experience.

This new alliance is a "win" for the girls, DVR, and Microsoft. Girls with disabilities got exposure to the high technology industry and the opportunity to see the diverse career paths and growth options a big business can offer. DVR gained counselor education and exposure to the jobs and technologies of tomorrow. Microsoft got exposure to young girls with disabilities and the options/accommodations they will be interested in when selecting technology products now and in the future.

This non-traditional alliance was initiated by Jan Holler from DVR and Mylene Padolina from Microsoft. It would have never been possible without the support of Mike O'Brien,

Director of Washington State DVR, and the Washington DVR staff who assisted in recruiting and also attended the camp to act as counselors for the girls. Several staff gave a week of their lives to see a girl from their area grow and dream. Heart-felt thanks to Rosa Lee Gallimore, Daphne Martin, Sally Nelsen-Bustetter, Karen Burke, Tonia Sugarman, Diana Hendrickson, Tammy Redmon, Kelly Boston and Jessica Newkirk.

In DigiGirlz' four year history, this was the first time that young women with disabilities participated. The girls were very enthusiastic about the experience, and want to return to Microsoft as DigiGirlz again or as college interns. As for Microsoft, the DigiGirlz staff was delighted with the energy and enthusiasm of our five girls. Microsoft has already committed space for up to 25 girls with disabilities statewide for next year.



“DigiGirlz was a big win for DVR and Microsoft.”
– Jan Holler



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

Job Hunting Skills Conference

By VRC Linda Singer (*Tacoma, WA*)

In 1998 a group of disability advocates representing city, state, and county agencies as well as educational and non-profit organizations met to discuss how to help people with disabilities become employed. As a result of that meeting, the group came up with a vision to develop a way to increase the success rate of people of disability when they attend job fairs.

The group began trying to answer the questions of: “How can we help our clients when they go to job fairs?” and “How can we track their success rate at the job fair?” We came up with an idea of having a one day conference to focus on job hunting skills, held in the spring before the major job fair in Tacoma.

Further brainstorming and setting clear objectives proved to be successful for the group. Together they developed an outline for a one day skills building jobs conference with vendor exhibits. They networked within the community and procured a location and the donation of lunch. They found a key note speaker to attend at no charge, as well as presenters of workshops. The City of Tacoma created and printed all the marketing flyers. A sponsor for ASL interpreters came forward to assure accessibility.

With everything organized and vendors in place Tools 4 Success was ready to open its doors. The first year they had just fewer than 100 attendees.

This confirmed to the group that their intuition was correct and they committed to take this free of charge skill building job conference to the next level.

Each year the conference has grown to offer a core set of sessions, such as mock interviewing, how to interview, how to ask for reasonable accommodations, how

to set up free email, resume preparation, how to find jobs in local and state governments, how to find a job using the internet, and other hot topics. One highlight has been the addition of a panel presentation by individuals with disabilities sharing success stories about their work.

The group has marketed the conference to the local high schools’ special education departments and now has about 200 special education students in attendance. They advertise by doing a presentation on the City Line Show which airs on Tacoma’s local TV channel, posting flyers on transit buses, and providing flyers to community agencies. Because of the success and the importance to the community, they are getting more and more sponsors making donations for the conference, such as Microsoft, Pepsi, Kitsap Bank, and Lakewood Lyons Club.

Since the first conference in 1999, Tools 4 Success has grown to over 350 attendees per year. The success of this conference is due to the growing support of local community

partners, city, county and state agencies, non-profits and most importantly school districts.

The positive impact to the disability community has been significant and the outreach to youth with disabilities is perhaps where the greatest success lies. Without the vision and goals of a few people, this conference would not be here today. Thanks to the many that help with “Tools 4 Success.” Individuals with disabilities are reaping the rewards of their efforts.

“
Together with community partners, the skills building conference was a success.
”
– Linda Singer



<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
		<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>13</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>20</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>27</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>31</i>		

Taylor

By VRC Karen Clack (Lynnwood, WA)

The day begins: There is breakfast and lunch to prepare - a typical mom's morning, but that is where "typical" ends. Five-year-old Taylor has High Functioning Autism. He has numerous allergy and intestinal problems, which frequently accompany Autism. Multiple food allergies prohibit him for eating all grains, dairy and assorted other foods. He does not like meat very much, so he must be fed to ensure that he maintains his weight. There are seven medicines to be given, some with and some without food. Getting dressed must be consistent - the left side first - socks, pants, shirt and shoes. While Taylor is able to dress himself, this requires coaching and cheerleading from the sidelines. Raising Taylor is a 24/7, line of sight supervision endeavor.

Taylor has speech therapy at 9 a.m., and then developmental preschool at the UW's Experimental Education Unit in Seattle. There, Taylor will have extended school day services in an integrated preschool environment, allowing him to learn how to play and interact with kids. After school there is more therapy - Sensory Integration - to help Taylor cope with the visual and auditory information that overwhelms him. Sights and sounds, which are barely perceived by most, can be excruciating for Taylor.

When the day ends for Taylor, there are still meetings to be scheduled to ensure that needed educational and therapeutic services are provided and progress is being made. Schedules will be arranged, and rearranged. Things can change almost daily. There are medication schedules to set and refills to be ordered. Specialized shopping trips are made for specific foods that Taylor is not allergic to and won't result in a relapse of the chronic diarrhea that he suffered for four years. This is just one day, a typical day, in the life of a family touched by Autism.

Autism is a complex neurological disorder resulting in developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life. Autism impacts the normal development of the brain in the areas of social interaction and communication skills. Children and adults with autism typically have difficulties in verbal and non-verbal communication, social interactions, and play activities.

Contrary to popular understanding, many children and adults with autism make eye contact, show affection, and demonstrate a variety of other emotions, although in varying degrees. Like other children, they respond to their environment in both positive and negative ways.

Autism is a spectrum disorder. The symptoms and characteristics of autism can present themselves in a wide variety of combinations, from mild to severe. Although autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors, children and adults can exhibit any combination of the behaviors in any degree of severity. Two children, both with the same diagnosis, can act very differently from one another and have varying skills.

While there is no cure for Autism, early therapeutic intervention is critical in maximizing potential for independence and has been proven to improve the quality of life for individuals who have Autism. Biomedical and dietary interventions can also be helpful in treating intestinal and other health symptoms associated with Autism. However all these forms of therapy are extremely expensive and frequently only limited insurance coverage is available. The average cost of caring for one child with Autism is \$40,000 a year.

“
I hope we can help people better understand what autism is about.
”
– Karen Clack



Autism is the most common of the Pervasive Developmental Disorders, affecting an estimated one in every 166 children and one in every 33 boys born this year (Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Reaching Our Customers

Over the past three years, DVR has taken great strides in enhancing the look and appearance of our internal and external communications. There has been an extensive redesign of our image and marketing material.

A new marketing and communications plan was developed that considers community, culture and disability. Our goal is to bridge communication barriers to support successful employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

To create a positive image and increase DVR's visibility in our communities, we are using marketing and communications tools to create a strong and consistent message that communicates our customer's value and our division's value in powerful, effective ways.

The key goals of our new marketing and communications plan are to:

- Position Washington DVR as the leading employment resource and advocate for people with disabilities and their success.
- Increase visibility of people with disabilities– Talk about the success of people with disabilities in everything we produce.
- Enhance the image of DVR with our audiences– Create greater involvement with community partners and DVR to build stronger partnerships which will have a successful impact on the lives of every Washingtonian.
- Disseminate accurate, timely news about VR, our services, customers and staff. We want our audiences to know and believe in DVR.

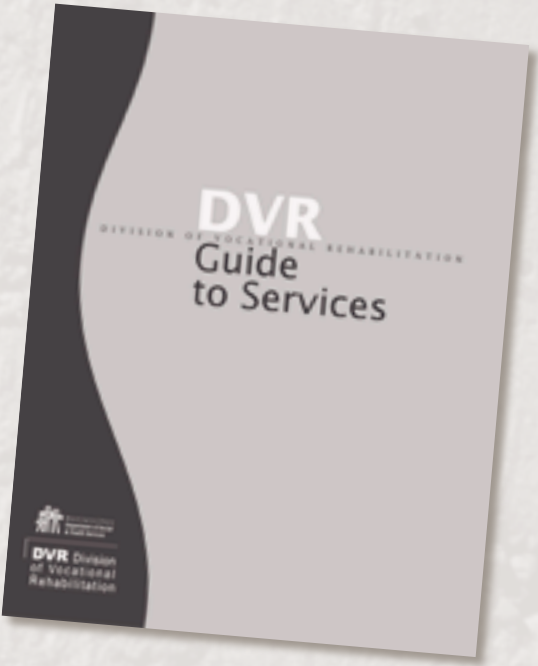
We believe it is important to show that employment for individuals with disabilities is about choice and creativity. A key part of our plan was to develop an image that could cross cultural boundaries within our communities in Washington. Those communities are as diverse as our customers and we knew that to have the greatest impact and success with our plan, we had to create material that was diverse.

One area that we found to be an obstacle for implementing our new plan was the availability of visual images of people with disabilities that communicated a message of empowerment. There was not much available that showed the successful outcomes that we wanted to portray in each of our publications. With support from our director, we went out to our staff and coordinated professional photo sessions with real DVR customers to capture the story of their success in a photographic journal. These were used to create a photographic catalog of our customers and communities across the state to use within our media material.

The picture catalog is one of our most successful pieces to our marketing plan, made possible by DVR staff and the individuals they serve volunteering to share their stories and their time. Thanks to them, we are able to more powerfully communicate how DVR changes the lives of people with disabilities, one job at a time.



“
Our new high school Transition Brochure reaches out to young people – it gets their attention.
”
– Tammy Redmon



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Chris Hancock
By VRC Pat Stimpson (Everett, WA)

Chris Hancock (Christopher) is a 22 year old customer, who applied for DVR services in March 2003. He experienced anoxia at birth and has a cognitive impairment and speech impairment as a result of that. He was in special education throughout his schooling and received speech therapy and accommodations in all his classes. After graduation, he worked as a transporter in a hospital for 7 months and as an operating room aid for 7 months. In both instances, he performed well, but the hospital had to make cutbacks and he was laid off.

He came to DVR seeking assistance in acquiring skills that would get him into a stable job. He completed an interest inventory and he had a very high interest in medical occupations. I investigated several options for on the job training opportunities, and Chris made several employer contacts, as well. Despite our efforts we were not able to find willing employers. Chris decided on a Nursing Assistant Certification (NAC) program at Everett Community College for training. He liked this option because the training was brief and he could get back to work quickly, the wages were acceptable to him, there were jobs available, and it is in the medical field. Hard to argue with the rational!

Chris has limited reading skills and school had always been very challenging for him. I attempted to get assistance from the Center for Students with Disabilities on campus, but due to the nature of Chris' primary diagnosis, the disability center did not feel that their services would be effective. Chris made arrangements with a friend who is employed as a nursing assistant to help him with his studies, if necessary.

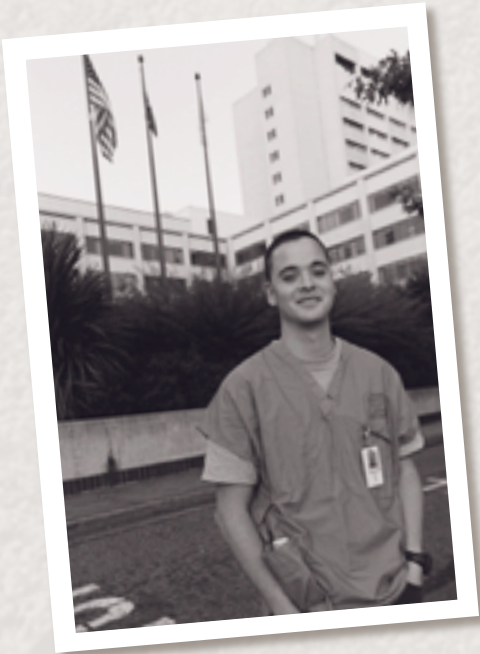
“
I knew what I
wanted and didn't
stop until I got it.
”
– Chris Hancock



Chris' parents also had some concerns about the demands of the program, but we all agreed he should try it. He passed the course and passed the state certification exam without accommodations. I assisted him with a resume and cover letter and reviewed interview questions with him. He stated in a matter of fact way that he was going to work at UW Medical Center and was going there the next day. I did not discourage him, but honestly had doubts that would be his first job after his training. Chris was right and I was wrong. He was hired a few weeks after he applied and works between 24-35 hours per week in the orthopedic surgery department. He is earning \$13/hour after his first 6 weeks which will increase to \$14/hour after 90 days of employment. After Chris passed his state certification exam for his NAC, it convinced him he could get his driver's license. Prior to this he had reservations about driving. Chris recently got his permit and will probably be driving in the next few months. Obviously, he has accomplished a great deal over the past year. As his counselor, I am bowled over by it. Perseverance!



Chris and VRC
Pat Stimpson



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Paul Oakes

By Eva Smith

Paul had been a customer of DVR since late 1999 and came with an excellent, unblemished record as a welder. He was only able to secure temporary contractual positions at shipyards in the Bremerton area and was beginning to believe that his deafness was a barrier to being hired as a full time permanent employee at these local facilities.

After some coaching, Paul agreed to meet with Jennifer White, a Job Developer, Advocate, and Trained Sign Language Interpreter. A plan was established for Jennifer to assist Paul with his resume and to accompany him to a job fair to ensure accessibility.

Within a couple weeks of writing Paul's plan, I was contacted about a WorkSource job lead for a welder at Safe Boats International in Bremerton, Washington.

Knowing to immediately follow up a potentially viable lead, I called Jennifer White on my cell phone and told her about the opportunity. Jennifer coordinated an interview with Bob Hungerford at Safe Boats, a company based in Port Orchard, WA that builds aluminum boats with flotation collars used primarily by the military and law enforcement agencies. Paul was required to demonstrate his competency in MIG aluminum welding and since he had not worked with this material for many years, he did not pass the company's welding test.

Since Paul was interested in advocating for himself as well as proving to Safe Boats that he could be an asset to their company, Paul took a course at Olympic College in MIG welding and received excellent references from his instructor. In late April 2004, he interviewed with Safe Boats Welding Manager, Jeff Becker, and was offered a full time position the following day.

A meeting was arranged with DVR, Jennifer White, and Bob Hungerford, the HR manager who is also responsible for safety and risk management at Safe Boats, to assess any accommodations that would be needed for Paul at the worksite. DVR's contract with Jennifer ensured that interpreter services were in place during his training.

A subsequent meeting was held with DVR, Jennifer, and all of Paul's co-workers to introduce Paul and discuss basic communication needs. Management and co-workers became instant natural supports for Paul. Co-workers were interested in taking basic sign language and established methods to communicate with Paul. Management was overwhelmingly willing to provide all accommodations needed to ensure for a safe work site.

Since that meeting, DVR has assisted with the purchase of a TTY to facilitate communication at the facility and purchased tools and a helmet for Paul to optimally be able to perform his required tasks. Most importantly, Paul is incredibly happy and secure; he does not have to worry about a time limited work contract anymore.



“Paul is incredibly happy in his job.”

– Eva Smith



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Andy Cirilo
By VRC Shon Copeland (Yakima, WA)

Andy Cirilo came to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) in 2002 after treatment for drug and alcohol addiction through the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment and Support Act (ADATSA). Andy met with DVR counselor Shon Copeland, who explained DVR services and assisted Andy with applying. In addition to drug and alcohol addiction, Andy revealed a history of mental health issues which had interfered with work. He spent years in prison related to his drug and alcohol use, and was having difficulty adjusting to life outside of prison – though he had a strong desire not to return. Andy agreed to do whatever he and his counselor thought necessary to succeed, including mental health counseling. Andy wanted to get his life in order and have a career.

Andy had some experience fighting fires in a prison work program, and decided he wanted a career as a wildlands fire fighter. To go through a community college program in fire science, work with local firefighters, and get his credentials would be a different and more difficult process than what he had done before. Understanding that, Andy and his counselor wrote his plan after some information gathering. DVR assisted Andy with training and the cost of gear needed for the program.

Andy worked hard, but after a few months felt he would not be allowed to continue the program because the fire department considered dropping him due to his background. Andy told his DVR counselor that he stopped attending trainings when he found out they may not let him train with an engine crew – a requirement of the training program. Andy’s counselor advised him to start attending again right away and to continue looking for a fire department willing to work with him.

Andy was able to show the fire department what he had done to address his background and his mental health issues. He worked to get his attendance back to where it should be, and was allowed to train with the crew. By the beginning of 2004, Andy had earned so much respect from one local department that they paid for his last two classes. Andy completed the training in June of 2004 and passed the test to become a Firefighter Class 2. He was offered federal and private jobs. Andy took a private job, and has been busy since then fighting several major fires in Washington State.

Andy is thankful to DVR for all their help, but it was ultimately Andy’s determination, hard work, and choices that led him to success. Andy plans to continue working on summer crews and to work for a small town fire department during the off season. Andy enjoys helping protect people and property, the thrill of his job, and the respect that comes with being a fire fighter.



“
I love the thrill of my job and that I can help others.
”
– Andy Cirilo



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Sharing His Story
By DVR Customer, Scott Thomas Ruffin

Justified

As the dove’s coo fills the morning air
As the cool breeze assures one is there
While the soft white clouds
Roll into plain view
As the neighbor cats paw the morning dew
As the early morning cars start engines loud
While the jet liner emerges
From soft white clouds
As the day begins
The beauties of life unfold
To each his own
Each new will hold
Adventures in life
As we come and go
So many to be found
Just a few one should know
The love of people
All friend no foe
The feel of good rest
With energy to show
The knowledge of significance
So life will matter
In whole

– Scott Thomas Ruffin

Scott Ruffin, is a poet and owner of Ruff-Go Consulting, is a Spinal Cord Injury Mentor at the University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC), Department of Rehabilitation, under the direction of Dr. Diana Cardenas, Professor of Spinal Cord Injury, and Scott’s personal Spinal Cord Injury Physician. Scott shares his story with thousands of students and hundreds of faculty members; aiding people with new spinal cord injuries in adjusting to life in

a wheel chair. Thanks to the aid and guidance of the UWMC and the support of DVR, Scott has adapted quite well to his circumstances, helped others adjust, and built a successful business, Ruff-Go Consulting.

Scott’s poetry has been published internationally and he has received many awards and recognition for his poems. They are written to inspire, challenge and even change ones perception and reality. He looks forward to the future and the people that he will have the opportunity to impact through poems and personal testimony.

“Due to the aid, and guidance of UWMC I have adapted quite well to my circumstances. With the support of my VR Counselor, I have succeeded as a businessman.”
– Scott Thomas Ruffin

“Scott has been an inspiration to many.”
– VRC Fred Trujillo



The thoughts are sincere
The appreciation is true
My hearts truest wish
is coming to you
As all hearts desire to share
their pulse
My opportunity now is
grand
Thank you DVR
For helping me show my
hand...
– Scott Thomas Ruffin



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Dan Pate
By VR Customer, Dan Pate

Editor’s note: Many times throughout the year we receive letters, notes and cards from customers. They are heartfelt expressions of appreciation and gratitude. This year we had a request from one former DVR customer to print his letter to help inspire and encourage others. Whether you work with individuals with disabilities or you are one, you can find encouragement in this letter from Dan Pate, a successfully rehabilitated VR customer.

I would like to start by introducing myself. My name is Dan Pate and I have been a C 4/5 quadriplegic for the last 13 years (paralyzed from the upper chest down). In the past I have learned a great deal about life in general. It has been a long journey, “but I have always held my head high.” In the summer of 2003, I graduated with my AA Degree from Everett Community College. While attending Everett Community College, I held office as President of a Club called “Barrier Breakers.” As Club President, I helped to advocate and educate faculty, staff, and students about the many seen and unseen disabilities people deal with on a daily basis. Our club reached a great number of people, introducing them to disability awareness. In fact, Barrier Breakers was awarded Club of the Year out of approximately thirty-five active Clubs.

I also had the opportunity to volunteer my skills to the Center for Disabled Services at Everett Community College. My abilities included training voice activation on computers to other students, introducing new disabled students to the College campus, among many other duties.

Getting started, total commitment was not an easy task, but with the support from DVR many windows of opportunity were always available. DVR has been the

backbone of my success. They were extremely helpful with finances for my enrollment, books and supplies, wheelchair expenses, and even the purchase of an extraordinary van for reliable transportation. However, the most important accommodation was the guidance provided by DVR.

As an individual, I try to make it a priority to keep educating others. In fact, I currently work as a consultant for Pacific Aerospace and Electronics. My job requires designing and creating adaptive equipment for other disabled. “It is a dream come true!”

I would like to stress to everyone with or without a disability that dreams and success can become a reality. Never give up hope, and keep a positive attitude. Use your resources and put in the hard work, I’m glad I did...

Sincerely,
Dan Pate



October

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
						<i>1</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>16</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>23</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>30</i>	<i>31</i>					

Anikò Samu-Kuschatka
By VRC Dean Waybright (Walla Walla, WA)

Is there such a thing as a beautiful cookie? Pretty, yes, but beautiful? Well, according to Anikò Samu-Kuschatka the answer is a resounding, yes! Anikò is the Hungarian-born owner of Walla Walla’s Springerle specialty company, And All the King’s Men. A Springerle is a handmade cookie, each one telling its own story. The type of delectable delights “that light up your eyes,” Anikò says. (The word Springerle, pronounced SPRING-urh-lee, comes from an old German dialect meaning “little knight.”)

Deaf since age 3, Anikò Samu-Kuschatka knew there were many changes in her life to come when at the age of 29 she was diagnosed with Ushers Syndrome. Ushers is a disease that attacks ones hearing and sight, ultimately leaving one deaf and blind. Perhaps the most difficult thing was giving up her joy of photography when her sight became too poor to continue, but her remarkable attitude propelled her to creating something wonderful.

With a will and desire for life, love, and the arts, Anikò embarked on a journey that would take her to 14th century Europe. After extensive research and a few fine tunings, her recipes, which included the finest ingredients, she hoped, would resurrect a many centuries old delectable called Springerle.

After moving to Walla Walla, Washington with her husband, Anikò made her way to the local DVR office where she met VRC Dean Waybright. She shared her goals and dreams for her own business, creating the cookies she came to love. With the support of her VRC, a business plan was developed and business cards and brochures were designed and purchased. The location was soon secured where Anikò could create her cookies by hand, one by one.

“
I am so thankful for the wonderful support from my family and DVR.
”
– Anikò Samu-Kuschatka



“A perfect Springerle does not just happen by accident,” says Aniko`. A single batch of the European-style cookies takes 3 days to create from start to final product. They come in all shapes and sizes of gorgeous impressions, every cookie telling a different story through pictures. Each cookie is made by hand from molds with designs that are centuries old. “The detailed designs told a story of the time. The historic cookie molds were once used as betrothal tokens and wedding and birth announcements. During political times, they were editorials. And for those who could not read or write they presented ideas about everything from religion to nature in their Springerle,” says Aniko`.

Today her business is thriving and people order her cookies from all over the country. Aniko` is committed to keeping the business relatively small, she wants to keep things made by hand and is unwilling to commercialize production. Aniko` feels that “making the Springerle by hand keeps the integrity and the quality of the cookie.”



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Daniel Sperline
By VRC Deborah Roberts (Lacey, WA)

Daniel Sperline wasn't willing to wait until age 21 for his career to start. Daniel now works at the local Aberdeen Safeway store as a Courtesy Clerk, and began his employment while completing his extended school IEP program at Ocosta High School. Daniel was the first person to graduate and continue on in an extended IEP school year from Ocosta High School.

Referred to DVR by the transition coordinator at Ocosta High School, Lisa Newhouse, Daniel was described as "an exceptional young man." Lisa states that Daniel had the "biggest support network... and his parents had a lot to do with getting it together and maintaining it – they deserve most of the credit." Also instrumental in Daniel's extended school year success was Ocosta High School's Kitchen Supervisor, Kate Iseminger. Lisa describes Kate as "support staff who knew Daniel and who has a gift for working with disabled people." Daniel worked several hours per day with Kate learning kitchen duties and was able to use his hands-on experience when taking the food handler's permit.

Sharon Tipton, a local WorkSource partner from Grays Harbor Chamber of Commerce Business-to-Business program, worked in conjunction with DVR-contracted job placement vendor, Morningside, to help find Daniel a job. Sharon states "When I first met Daniel, he was focused on what he wanted to do... which was work at Safeway! He obtained his food handler's permit without any special accommodations and passed with flying colors!" When asked to describe Daniel, Sharon easily replies, "He's bubbly and friendly!"

DVR called upon all of the partnership resources: Ocosta School District, Washington Initiative for Supported Employment (WISE), Morningside, Grays Harbor Chamber of Commerce

Business-to-Business program, Grays Harbor County/DDD representatives, and Daniel's family members, to develop a plan for supported employment. The cooperation of all parties enabled DVR staff Deborah Roberts, Lead VRC, to complete a Service Delivery Outcome Plan for job stabilization and retention services. Through DVR advocacy, Ocosta High School agreed to provide interim long-term job coaching until Daniel turned 21 and other long-term funding sources became available. An Independent Living evaluation, purchased by DVR, offered the family and the school's Support Services the opportunity to teach Daniel independent living skills as part of his extended school year.

Betty Beckett, Gray's Harbor resident and longtime advocate for individuals with disabilities, states "the planning process is so important – it just shows what the participation of the family can do."

Safeway store manager Dave Steele, and assistant manager Jamie Kennedy, describe Daniel as "adaptable" and "upbeat." Daniel's popularity is evident as Safeway customers make a point to stop and greet him as he goes about his duties.

When asked who was the most instrumental in helping become employed, Daniel reports, "Cynthia at Morningside. She never gave up on job hunting for me. Cynthia knew I wanted a job where I could work with people. DVR made it possible for Morningside to job search for me." Daniel states, "I'm thankful for my job and for the workers at Safeway that help me stay focused to do my best job."



“
I wanted a job where I could work with people.
”
– Daniel Sperline



When asked about his future plans for advancing in employment, Daniel states "I'd like to try to work in the deli."

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

2004 DVR Annual Report

A publication of:

The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

To request this publication in alternate format, please contact a Customer Service Representative at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

They can be reached at 1-800-637-5627. This publication is also available on our website at www1.dshs.wa.gov/dvr.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

PO Box 45340 ■ Olympia, WA 98504-5340

1-800-637-5627 (Voice/TTY) or (360) 438-8000 (Voice/TTY)



DVR Division
of Vocational
Rehabilitation